

NOTE

A New Synonym of the African Biting Midge *Parabezzia falcipennis* Clastrier (Diptera: Ceratopogonidae)

In their recent revision of Nearctic *Parabezzia*, Grogan and Wirth (1977, J. Kans. Entomol. Soc. 50: 49–83) stated that *P. falcipennis* Clastrier (1960, Arch. Inst. Pasteur Algérie 38: 258–298) from Zaire, is the only species of the genus known outside of the New World. They overlooked another African species, *P. insolita* Vattier and Adam (1966, Ann. Spéléologie 21: 711–773) from the Congo (Brazzaville). A recent examination of the descriptions and illustrations of *P. insolita* and *P. falcipennis* indicate that they are conspecific. This paper presents evidence supporting their conspecificity.

Clastrier (1960) described *P. falcipennis* from a single male taken at Buku N'Situ (=M'Bouku), 12°06'E, 4°32'S, during May 1956. This locality is situated at the intersection of the Loukenene River and the Ocean Congo Railroad near the station Fourastier in the dense forest of Mayombe. The single female of *P. insolita* (Vattier and Adam, 1966) was taken by black light during 1964 within the cave of Meya, 14°31'E, 5°53'S, which is situated near N'zouari in the narrow valley of the Niari in the Bangou Forest. On the basis of the illustrations provided with the descriptions of these two specimens, it is evident that they belong to the *Alexanderi* Group of *Parabezzia* as defined by Grogan and Wirth (1977). The key character of this group is the basal costal swelling of the wing, which is present in both sexes. In their description of *P. insolita*, Vattier and Adam (1966) state "Costa renflée à sa base comme *Parabezzia falcipennis*"

Through the courtesy of Jean Clastrier of the Paris Museum, I have examined the male holotype of *P. falcipennis*. Dr. Clastrier also contacted J. P. Adam at ORSTROM in an effort to locate the type of *P. insolita*. Dr. Adam located the case supposedly containing the type but the specimen was not present. It is not certain then if the type of *P. insolita* is lost or whether it is in another collection.

In addition to the basal costal swellings, the descriptions of *P. falcipennis* and *P. insolita* indicate that they are both similar in overall coloration and structure. In view of these overall similarities and because the two type-localities are within 200 miles of one another I conclude that *P. insolita* is a synonym of *P. falcipennis* (NEW SYNONYMY), the former merely representing the opposite sex of the latter.

I would like to thank Jean Clastrier for the loan of the type of *P. falcipennis*, for providing information on the type localities and for other courtesies extended.

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